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THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

CATALOGUE

ARTISTS UNAPPRECIATED IN THEIR DAY

NOVEMBER 5 TO DECEMBER 10

NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINE

CATALOGUE

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN — 1606-1669

PORTRAIT OF HENDRICKJE STOFFELS

Lent by Duveen Brothers, Inc., New York

JAN STEEN — 1626-1679

THE MUSIC LESSON

Lent by Schaeffer Galleries, New York

JACOB VAN RUISDAEL — 1628-1682

LANDSCAPE WITH WATERFALL

Lent by Schaeffer Galleries, New York

MEINDERT HOBBEMA — 1638-1709

A RIVER SCENE

Lent by Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit

CAMILLE COROT — 1796-1875

PAYSAGE DU CAVALIER

Lent by Wildenstein and Company, New York

JEAN FRANCOIS MILLET — 1814-1875

SHEEP SHEARING

Lent by Chicago Art Institute, Chicago,
Potter Palmer Collection

HONORE DAUMIER — 1808-1879

CHILDREN UNDER A TREE

Lent by The Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo

LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN — 1824-1898

SUR LA PLAGE

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Camille Pissarro 1831-1903

PAYSAGE

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Camille Pissarro 1831-1903

LE MARCHE AUTOUR DE L'EGLISE ST. JACQUES A DIEPPE

Lent by Wildenstein and Company, New York

Edouard Manet 1832-1883

LA JETEE DE BOULOGNE

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Edgar Degas 1834-1917

DANCERS

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Worcester, Chicago

Edgar Degas 1834-1917

TROIS DANSEUSES EN ROSE

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Alfred Sisley 1839-1899

UNE ROUTE PRES DE LOUVECIENNES

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Claude Monet 1840-1926

HAYSTACKS

Lent by Chicago Art Institute, Chicago
Coburn Collection

Claude Monet 1840-1926

LE CHEVAL MECANIQUE
(Portrait of Jean Monet)

Lent by Wildenstein and Company, New York

Claude Monet 1840-1926

PAYSAGE A PORT VILLEZ

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Berthe Morisot 1841-1895
ENVIRONS DU TREPORT

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Auguste Renoir 1841-1919
PAYSAGE AVEC PONT

Lent by Wildenstein and Company, New York

Auguste Renoir 1841-1919
L'ALPHABET, JEAN ET SA BONNE

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Paul Cezanne 1839-1906
CHEMIN A L'ENTREE D'UNE FORET

Lent by Durand-Ruel, Inc., New York

Paul Gauguin 1848-1903
SELF PORTRAIT

Lent by Wildenstein and Company, New York

Paul Gauguin 1848-1903
INCANTATION

Lent by Chicago Art Institute, Chicago
Coburn Collection

Vincent van Gogh 1853-1890
THE WHEATFIELD

Lent by The Toledo Museum of Art

Georges Seurat 1859-1891
DIMANCHE D'ETE A LA GRANDE JATTE

Lent by Wildenstein and Company, New York

GEORGES SEURAT 1859-1891

DRAWING

Lent by Wildenstein and Company, New York

HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC 1864-1901

TRISTAN BERNARD

Lent by Wildenstein and Company, New York

We are deeply indebted to the dealers, museums and individuals listed who have made this exhibition possible:

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FOREWORD

This exhibition is designed to illustrate the fallibility of public taste at certain art periods in past history—the failure to appreciate the really great artists of the day. As a matter of record there have been only two great periods when there was anything approximating a general understanding of contemporary genius. The Greek, when it is said there were only twenty thousand freemen in Athens (most of them highly educated in all branches of art, literature and government), and the Italian Renaissance, with its great art patrons, both Church and Princes. The Northern Renaissance presented glaring failures in public taste; and in France, from the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, through the Louis, artists were dependent on rich patrons.

There is no gainsaying that in the past the public has often been strangely apathetic to the master-workmen of its day and equally enthusiastic over artists whose names are now legendary. Modern study of values has restored many artists to their real positions in the history of art—has elevated some and reduced or eliminated others. It is no longer conclusive to say that one likes this painting or dislikes another but rather on what the final judgment is based. Almost to our day we have seen painters, from Vermeer to the Impressionists, rescued from oblivion and the Messoniers, Bonheurs and many of the nineteenth century Dutch artists, take their relatively insignificant places. Others, such as the Florentine and Siennese primitives, popular in their day, sank to new values in the public mind and only in the late nineteenth century were returned to their proper positions in art history. Scholars and intelligent collectors have immensely broadened and improved public taste and while criticisms of any art form must of necessity be in a constant state of flux, there is no question but that education has steadily reduced the flash judgments of the past.

The few examples here shown are taken at random and the list might easily be extended almost indefinitely, not alone to painting but to all the arts. Change in style has generally been resented by each succeeding generation and whether it has been Manet, Wagner or Dostoevsky, the man on the street has issued his denunciation with the same finality. An exhibition of the accepted artists of various periods would present even more devastating results but it is too delicate a situation to approach as too many of us have them on our own walls. Best sellers are not noted for longevity. Price levels artificially set by fads or propaganda are no basis for values but sound painting has generally won through and the public auction of today, in spite of personal opinion, does at least show some of the errors of the past and the sounder judgment of a more enlightened outlook.

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN PORTRAIT OF HENDRICKJE STOFFELS

I

SOME SEVENTEENTH CENTURY DUTCH PAINTERS

Rembrandt van Rijn, 1606-1669

Rembrandt, whose work during his early life had a tremendous vogue, lost cast after financial misfortunes assailed him. Michel says: "In happier days he had found it difficult to carry out his commissions but towards the end of his life he could not sell his pictures at even nominal prices." His great-nephew, Wybrandt de Geest, has left some pitiable details on this score. "But a short time ago," he says in his book, "the ignorance of refuted connoisseurs was so gross as regards the admirable works of the mighty Rembrandt, that it was possible to buy one of his portraits for sixpence, as many well-known amateurs and dealers can attest." His contemporaries were silent regarding his death and he passed away without notice from literary men or brother artists. Modern critical opinion judges Rembrandt's late work, from 1650 to his death, the high point in his career. His artistic reception is an example of the fickleness of public taste and the influence that his financial status had on their critical judgment.

JAN STEEN THE MUSIC LESSON

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Jan Steen, c. 1626-1679

During his lifetime he was often in desperate straits. For example, the February after his wife's death an apothecary seized his goods and sold his pictures to satisfy a debt of ten florins. "The public paid him better for drinks at his cafe than for pictures." Houbraken states that "he and his wife lived happily together, though their larder was often ill-stocked.

JACOB VAN RUISDAEL LANDSCAPE WITH WATERFALL

3

Jacob van Ruisdael, c. 1628-1682

In the prime of his manhood he fell into poverty and died in 1682, an inmate of the Haarlem Almshouse where his friends, the Menonites had him interred and paid his expenses. Ruisdael is today generally considered the greatest of the Dutch landscapists.

Jan Vermeer of Delft, 1632-1675

Vermeer presents one of the unexplainable examples in history of the failure in public understanding. He was not only but mildly appreciated in his own day but sank into a deeper and deeper oblivion after his death, so that for one hundred and fifty years his name was practically unknown. Dealers, to sell his works, were obliged to attach the names of secondary artists to his paintings. It seems strange to us now that one of the greatest as well as the rarest artists of all times should have been so slightly regarded over such a period of years. Money is but a poor criterion of art values but it is nevertheless an astounding fact that the Painter's Studio in the Czernim Collection for which several years ago a million dollars was offered, actually sold in the Amsterdam sale of 1696 (twenty years after his death) at eighteen dollars. The sale catalogues of this period are a succession of such prices, before his work faded almost into oblivion. Arnold Houbraken, the gossiping Vasari of Holland, omitted his name from his History of the Netherland Painters, (Amsterdam, 1719). By this oversight the Hall of Fame was for a long time closed to Vermeer. Subsequent writers on art, after the manner of their day, industriously copied Houbraken. The discursive Jakob Compo Weijerman, prolix to boredom concerning nonentities, in his four-volume, Lives of Dutch Painters, is silent about Vermeer. Sir Joshua Reynolds in his notes of a journey to Flanders and Holland, writes of seeing in the Cabinet of Mr. Le Brun a woman pouring milk from one bottle to another by D. Vandermeere. He apparently was not profoundly impressed. Kugler's Handbook of Painting, 1854, had not mentioned Jan Vermeer of Delft anywhere in its two volumes although it gave four lines to John van der Meer, The Younger, of Haarlem.

America is particularly fortunate in the number of Vermeers it possesses but for most of them colossal figures have been paid by our art patrons of the past twenty-five years. They are so highly valued today that it is next to impossible to borrow them for exhibition purposes.

Note: The Vermeer prices of the 1696 sale will be found accompanying the reproductions of his work in the Exhibition.

MEINDERT HOBBEMA A RIVER SCENE

Meindert Hobbema, 1638-1709

His works were little thought of during his lifetime or even during the succeeding generation. He died in December, 1709, and was interred in a pauper's grave, as his wife had been before him. No mention is made of his name in any sale catalogue until 1735, (twenty-six years after his death), when two landscapes were sold for seventy and forty florins. At this sale a picture by a now forgotten master, Conrad Roefel, fetched three hundred florins. At the San Donato sale in 1880, a Hobbema landscape with small Van der Velde cattle and figures sold for £8,820. From the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century no engravers reproduced a Hobbema picture although works by all his contemporaries were engraved. Other painters' names were used on his works to procure better prices. Not until the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century did English amateurs pave the way for modern appreciation.

CAMILLE COROT — PAYSAGE DU CAVALIER

BARBIZON SCHOOL

Camille Corot, 1796-1875

He sent examples of his numerous paintings year after year to the Salons but nobody bought them. The Institute adopted an attitude of violent hostility to this school of popular landscape; it persecuted the artists with all the means at its command and it was scarcely less hostile to Camille Corot, the outstanding French landscape painter of the period. From 1822 when Corot was twenty-six, he lived on a small allowance and other funds provided by his father without selling a single picture for sixteen years, and he did not begin to make a regular income from his work until he was nearly sixty.

The struggle for existence from 1841 to 1848 was at times a severe one. The little family was at times on the verge of actual want or even passed it. Thus Millet receiving one hundred francs brought him by a friend in 1848, said, "Thanks, they come in season, we have not eaten in two days: but the important thing is that the children have not suffered, they have had enough for their nourishment." He painted anything and everything asked of him: in Cherbourg in 1841, signs for a veterinary, a tight-rope dance, a sail-maker. The thirty francs he received for a sign painted for a midwife in Paris in 1848 supported him and his wife for fifteen days. Sensier mentions the prices he received in 1848: six beautiful drawings for a pair of shoes, four life-size portrait busts for twenty francs, any number of charming sketches at prices from five francs to one franc. Single canvases that would hardly find a buyer at any price when painted, have brought since his death prices that would not merely have assured him a competence, but wealth. The Gleaners, which Millet had sold for two thousand francs, brought three hundred thousand; the Angelus, which he had great trouble in disposing of for twenty-five hundred francs, brought at the Secreton Sale in 1889, 553,000 francs, and later, in 1890, eight hundred thousand.

JEAN FRANCOIS MILLET — SHEEP SHEARING

HONORE DAUMIER CHILDREN UNDER A TREE

Honore Daumier, 1808-1879

Only his lithographs were known in his lifetime and he was never able to sell any of his other works. At the age of sixty-nine his eyesight failed and he retired in poverty to a country house which had been given him by Corot. He died two years later.

THE IMPRESSIONIST AND POST IMPRESSIONIST PAINTERS

The Impressionists and Post Impressionists were always under attack by the Salon officials and the press, and the public was meekly led by the former. The persecution was continuous and relentless almost to the close of the century. These painters were accused of communism, vulgarity, indecency and puerility. The attacks were kept alive by the older school of academicians resentful of any change from established form. The names of most of these painter critics are now well on the way to oblivion but during their ascendency they made even a bare living difficult for the artists who are today ranked as the glory of the nineteenth century. Had it not been for a few loyal friends many of these men would not have survived the ordeal. Pere Tanguy accepted paintings for colors, Muret the restaurateur took their works in exchange for food, Durand-Ruel purchased blocks of pictures from Monet and Manet, and later financed Renoir and others, and made their mere existence possible.

None of the product of the Impressionists or Post Impressionists now in the Louvre or Luxembourg, were purchased by these institutions. Manet's Olympia offered by subscription in 1870 was at first refused and only finally accepted after long negotiation. The Caillebotte collection by bequest in 1895 refused two Cézannes, one Manet, three Sisleys, eight Monets, eleven Pissarros and accepted the remainder under protest. Count Camondo, another supporter gave his entire collection to the Louvre. Such gifts as these, received under bitter protest, represent the Impressionists in the two galleries. The Group was obliged for years to hold its own showings which were held up to derision by the clique organized for the purpose. Their main critical support came from a few intelligent writers such as Zola, Baudelaire, Duret, Duranty and Henri Riviere, but for many years they made but slight impression on the public mind, poisoned by the opposition. We have singled out the Impressionists and Post Impressionists for special comment for at no time in art history has an entire group of intelligent painters been subjected to such continuous and senseless attack. Also because the public so grossly erred in its judgment in this instance, almost within our own lifetime.

LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN — SUR LA PLAGE

8

Louis Eugene Boudin, 1824-1898

Son of a pilot at Honfleur. He was one of the best French marine painters. Boudin was a follower of Corot and the first teacher of Monet. He exhibited first at the Salon in 1853 and regularly after 1875 without attracting much attention until one of his paintings was bought by the Luxembourg in 1888. In 1896 when over seventy received the Legion of Honor. He died two years afterwards. Has been admired and purchased by the English in recent years.

CAMILLE PISSARRO LE MARCHE AUTOUR DE L'EGLISE ST. JACQUES A DIEPPE

9

Camille Pissarro, 1831-1903

Born at St. Thomas. He began painting woods in sunlight, fields of corn, hillsides and villages and afterwards, when his sight failed, populous urban scenes. He was the first to paint bird's-eye views of city streets. Pissarro led the Impressionists toward technical studies. His marvelous greens. He lost permanently all his work over a long period, during

CAMILLE PISSARRO PAYSAGE

the German advance in the Franco-Prussian War. His paintings of rustic and rural life were never popular. They were considered vulgar by the public. Actually his peasants were real peasants not derived from a theory—neither idealized nor degraded. He was a kindly man of considerable influence in the Impressionist group. Met failure uncomplainingly.

EDOUARD MANET — LA JETEE DE BOULOGNE

Edouard Manet, 1832-1883

Manet led the fight for Impressionism although he never exhibited with the group. From 1859 to 1874 he fought the Salon painters and their public almost single-handed. He was a natural leader and the only Impressionist painter who defended the cause before the public. In consequence he was bitterly attacked and not until two years before his death was he allowed to exhibit at the Salon without interference from its jury. In 1872 Manet, who came from a fairly well-to-do family, found himself short of money. In thirteen years he had only sold two or three pictures. He had gambled on the hope of selling some of his work at a one-man show he organized in 1867, and his capital was depleted. In 1872 Durand-Ruel saved the situation by purchasing twenty-two pictures for thirty-five thousand francs.

EDGAR DEGAS DANCERS

12

Edgar Degas, 1834-1917

He was interested in individual forms and occupational gestures, ballet dancers, washerwomen, nude women at their toillettes. Also in the effect of work on the physique. Superb colorist. He posed foreground figures, frames cutting into subjects and unusual compositions. He delighted in homely faces, large biceps of dancers, pure realism. Was also interested in race horses in movement—almost photographic in their action. Degas came of a well-to-do family so was not hampered financially but was not a popular painter until late in life. Durand-Ruel took his output after 1896.

EDGAR DEGAS — TROIS DANSEUSES EN ROSE

ALFRED SISLEY
UNE ROUTE PRES DE LOUVECIENNES

Alfred Sisley, 1839-1899

French painting would have lacked a particular note of ingenuousness, freshness and spontaneity without him. He began as an amateur with an allowance from his father. In 1870 his father failed and for the rest of his life Sisley lived in real poverty. Unable at one time to secure one hundred francs for his pictures, two months after his death twenty-seven of his canvases sold for 112,000 francs, and a year later at the Tervernier sale one picture sold for forty-three thousand francs.

CLAUDE MONET — LE CHEVAL MECANIQUE

CLAUDE MONET HAYSTACKS

Claude Monet, 1840-1926

His Impression, Soleil Levant, exhibited in the Independent show of 1874, referred to in derision, was accepted as the name of the school—Impressionism. The theory of Impressionism revolves around Monet, who carried it to its ultimate conclusion. He concentrated on symbolism and the perpetual movement of light. Some of his earlier work though, before he became so involved in theory, is amongst his best. Like Renoir and Sisley his early life was full of hardships. He traded his pictures for food and colors. In 1872 Durand-Ruel bought twenty-two of his pictures for thirty-five thousand francs and from then on life was simplified. His public sales though from 1874 and 1886 were almost none. His one-man show in 1880 was a dire failure. The exhibitions in New York and Boston in 1886 and 1887 were successful and after 1891 he was a prosperous artist.

BERTHE MORISOT — ENVIRONS DU TREPORT

Berthe Morisot, 1841-1895

Granddaughter of Fragonard and sister-in-law of Manet. She studied for short time under Corot and later under Manet. Followed Manet's style. At times spontaneous and colorful in her work, she was particularly effective in the use of greens. She exhibited with the Impressionist group and was included with them in popular denunciation.

AUGUSTE RENOIR PAYSAGE AVEC PONT

19

Auguste Renoir, 1841-1919

Painted first in a porcelain factory. Later painted blinds and saved enough money to study at art school. From 1863 to 1871 he was in dire poverty and got through only by doing odd jobs that offered. Between 1870 and 1878 his pictures were regularly refused at the Salons. From the seventies to middle of eighties his portrait painting was his main source of income. After his one-man exhibition in '83 he began to be more successful and Durand-Ruel assured him of a comfortable competence. After he had been working for years went to school again for two years and worked seven to ten hours a day in life classes. He constantly changed his style. Was a great colorist. No one ever painted women and children more superbly. They are the breath and soul of their subjects. Not just individuals but the epitome of the race. He had an equal gift for still life.

AUGUSTE RENOIR L'ALPHABET, JEAN ET SA BONNE

Paul Cezanne, 1839-1906

Broke from the Impressionist tradition and reduced painting to the simplest, most direct forms. He was almost the last of the great nineteenth century painters to be understood. His position is now definitely assured. He received an income of fifteen hundred a year from his family for more than twenty-three years. Throughout this period he was never able to support himself by his painting, in fact scarcely sold anything. Between 1877 and 1889 he stored his pictures in Paris with artist-colorman Tanguy, who showed them to possible purchasers. Tanguy apparently had instructions to sell them at fixed prices of forty francs for the smaller sizes and one hundred francs for the larger, but the sales were negligible. In the 1877 exhibition of the Independents, Cézanne brought down on himself the chief odium. Discouraged by the malice shown he withdrew from all exhibitions for twenty years and his work was practically unknown in Paris during that period.

PAUL CEZANNE CHEMIN A L'ENTREE D'UNE FORET

Paul Gauguin, 1848-1903

He reduced painting to flat surfaces and color patterns and denied realism. Restored the decorative values. He dropped imitation of nature and social anecdote and introduced symbolism and balanced decorative brush work. In 1891 he sold thirty of his pictures at auction for something less than ten thousand francs, in order to go to Tahiti. In 1895, after an exhibition at Durand-Ruel's he tried to sell his pictures at auction but few reached the nominal price. Died in the Marquesas at the age of fifty-two.

PAUL GAUGUIN SELF PORTRAIT

VINCENT VAN GOGH THE WHEATFIELD

Vincent van Gogh, 1853-1890

He had little education or culture. His life was a succession of tragedies. Lacked the balance of the French tradition. His enthusiasms and his sacrifices were excessive. Was mentally unbalanced in everything but his art. He used color emotionally. In the end he destroyed himself in the effort to attain contact with his subjects. No one ever approached painting in such an intense way. His pictures almost vibrate. His brother Theo was almost his only purchaser during his lifetime.

GEORGES SEURAT DIMANCHE D'ETE A LA GRANDE JATTE

25

Georges Seurat, 1859-1891

He developed the pointilist theory of painting. In 1900, nine years after his death, one of his pictures sold at auction in Paris for twenty-seven francs. In 1901 fifty-three of his paintings and drawings were collected for an exhibition on the Boulevard des Italiens but not one was sold. In the nineteen twenties a Paris syndicate was reputed to have offered four hundred thousand dollars for one of his larger works. His early death supposed to have been brought on by long hours of overwork.

GEORGES SEURAT DRAWING

HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC TRISTAN BERNARD

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, 1864-1901

He went further than Degas in romantic realism. Cared little for light and color and painted individuals in the raw. He completely unmasked the sordidness of his subjects, taken from the music halls and the lowest brackets of life. Has portrayed some characters as vividly as any novelist. Degas painted occupationally distorted bodies, Lautrec distorted souls. Lautrec was dwarfed from an accident in youth and became a misanthrope. He never sold a picture during his lifetime but his poster-designs were considered supreme and still are. Came of an old and wealthy family and was never without funds.